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The Cell Revisited

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Living Force Plot Director and Campaign Designer Morrie Mullins presents the latest in our monthly series of supplements to the campaign's newest scenarios. In "The Cell Revisited," the alien crime lord Nirama sends a message to his followers in which he looks at the roles of trust, respect, and loyalty in his shady organization - and issues a challenge to those who attacked him. This supplement ties into the August Living Force scenario, Philology, the third part of the "Below the Belt" trilogy.

To the Membership - Nirama

Loyalty. This is the concept that has ever been most key to our survival and our prosperity. I ask loyalty of you, and I provide loyalty in return. It is never a certain proposition. There are flaws in each one of us that make loyalty more likely, or less likely, to manifest. But I have seen, first hand, the pain that can arise when loyalty is called into doubt. In those cases where loyalty is lost altogether, it is not uncommon for organizations such as ours to splinter, perhaps disintegrate. It is also not uncommon for lives to be lost.

The last Standard Year has brought the loyalty of some of our companions into question. I have addressed issues surrounding the so-called "Cell" in the past, but of late, I have received reports that they might not be quite so extinct as I had been led to believe. It was my understanding that with the help of the outsiders, Markus and I brought down the Cell and extracted its core leadership from our ranks. That even rumors of its continued existence can reach my ears disturbs me far more than I can express.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to discuss with you both the positive and negative aspects of loyalty. Because disloyalty seems to be at the core of what has occurred of late, let me begin with the drawbacks to being loyal.

Being loyal means, at its core, accepting another individual as being worthy of trust, respect, and some level of obedience. I fully recognize that most of us would not be in the lines of work we have chosen if we were good at any of these things. There are reasons to not trust any given individual we might come across. Even the best of persons might be misled by a false sense of righteousness. Even the kindest, most gentle Jedi might - through some misguided application of a long-established and completely correct principle - engage in activities that cause us to call into doubt whether that Jedi is worthy of our trust. Philology Adventure Summary Len Markus, aware of recent

activity in the Asteroid Belt beyond the "legitimate" explorations, is interested in gaining information on behalf of Nirama. "Knowledge for the sake of knowledge" is his excuse, but of course, there is no such thing. When the heroes begin discovering even more strange creatures and a familiar, but different, mysterious room deep within one of the asteroids, it becomes clear that Markus, at least, is after a great deal more than just knowledge. An adventure for Living Force heroes of levels 1 to 9. Part three in the "Below the Belt" Trilogy. Play after "Below the Belt" parts one and two.

I have spoken to many of you. Childhood is something distant to us, even those of us who are young, and it was filled with pain. We exist on what society deems its "fringes" because someone, at some point, shunned us from the polite society into which we were born. Or perhaps we have never had a chance at polite society, where trust is the norm. For whatever reason, we are not built to trust, and remaining loyal to anyone - myself included - requires that trust be present. Recognizing this, and knowing that words are empty and that only actions matter, I have made it my mission to not speak of trust but to demonstrate it to you. If you take the time to reflect on the time since the venerable Riboga left Cularin, you will see that our profits are up, our prosecutorial rates are down, and the number of deaths on the job has been reduced by over half. I will not ask you to trust me. I will only ask you to look at the outcomes of my leadership.

Respect is a trickier beast still. The most highly honored Riboga ran things in a fashion in keeping with his home culture, inspiring fear in those around him and leveraging that fear to obtain his desired ends. It was his belief that such measures were the only means of ensuring that you would follow his commands. I prefer to think of you as more highly evolved than that. You are capable of thought and decision-making. I allow you the freedom to choose your own paths, with the understanding that you will accept the consequences of those choices. Use of force by my administration is limited quite strictly to those instances in which individuals sought to directly undermine and threaten either my own person or others within the Consortium. I have never made force a threat. It is simply part of the bargain. You respect me and the fellows of the Consortium, and I will respect you in return.

Living Force Scenario Supplements

Renna's Transport Service (September 2002)

The Cell Revisited (August 2002)

Dark on Dark (July 2002)

A Friendly Face (June 2002)

The Sith Fortress (May 2002)

Desert Cries (April 2002)

The Kaluthin Are Always Greener (March 2002)

An Official Engagement (February 2002)

Oblivion's Kiss (December 2001)

Broken Orbits: Tilnes (November 2001)

Broken Orbits: Uffel (October 2001)

Broken Orbits: Dorumaa (September 2001)

It is on obedience, though, where most of us run into problems. Were we good at obeying, we would not spend our lives running blockades, smuggling forbidden wares, and walking in the shadows to keep ourselves from the eyes of the remainder of the world. Yet to follow someone, to allow someone to lead, to be loyal to an individual - any individual - requires some level of obedience. The amount required is inversely proportional to the amount of trust that exists. The more trust, the less stringent the obedience requirements. The less trust, the more obedience is necessary. When I provide you with directives, I expect that they will be followed, but I trust you to make decisions as to how they can best be accomplished. If my directives contain fallacies, it is within your prerogative to point them out to me and ask me to reconsider. I do not require, nor do I even want, blind obedience.

The problem - - for many would consider it a problem, though I do not, particularly - is that by offering you the freedom that I have, I open the door to plotting against my position. I make it easier for groups such as the Cell to function.

So be it. If I were to rule with an iron fist, killing anyone who questioned my judgment, I would be no less likely to have opposition emerge within the ranks. I therefore challenge the Cell to make itself known. Surrender, and there can be peace within our community. I hope that you will not push me to fight, but if it comes to that, you have been warned.

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